

Overview of the San Joaquin Valley Type A Check Station Operations

LET'S STAY SAFE & HEALTHY

KEEP YOUR PAWS
CLEAN!



COVER YOUR
MUZZLE!



KNOW THE SYMPTOMS
& STAY IN YOUR DEN!



STAY 6' APART!
(OR ELSE)



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2020 CDFW Wildlife Area Operational Changes under COVID-19 Messages for Public Outreach (DRAFT)

Spending time in the outdoors is beneficial to our overall health and wellness. Now more than ever, we understand the public's need to enjoy the benefits of nature. As a result, the Department plans to operate wildlife areas and refuges to provide recreational opportunities for the upcoming waterfowl season while keeping hunters and Department staff safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. We intend to keep areas open as long as visitors implement recommended health and safety practices.

As the 2020 hunting season takes place, the Department will implement the following procedures for public and staff health and safety. Please remember the Department may need to update these provisions to ensure consistency with the latest state and local recommendations and directives.

Health and Safety/Sanitation:

- Please consider conducting a home health screening ([Symptom Screener](#)) before visiting a Wildlife Area for hunting or other recreational purposes.
- All staff and members of the public are required to wear masks and maintain a minimum of six feet distance from others while conducting check station business and participating in recreational programs, including hunting.
- Staff and the public are encouraged to practice appropriate [hand hygiene](#).
- Most non-portable restrooms will be closed to the public. Portable restrooms will be provided.
- Handwashing and/or hand sanitizer stations will be provided near all restrooms. Please bring your own supplies for use in areas where stations are not available.
- Please consider bringing your own cleaning supplies to pre-clean and post-clean portable restrooms and blinds
- Please plan to carry out your own trash

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Hunting Reservations and Lotteries

The Department does not anticipate changes to the current system of applying for and receiving reservations to hunt on state and federal wildlife areas through the Automated License Data System (ALDS). To fill vacancies created by reservation holders who are absent at check-in the morning of a shoot day, the Department utilizes in-person lotteries or first-come-first-served (FCFS) waiting lists. The Department will implement the following changes to in-person lottery and FCFS procedures for the 2020-21 waterfowl season:

- Hunters will be allowed to apply for a lottery or first-come-first-served entry at only one state wildlife area or federal refuge per day.
- Lottery hours may be adjusted and coordinated to facilitate this change across all regional check stations.
- At most areas, all hunters in a party will be required to apply for a lottery or first-come first-served entry in-person.
- Controls will be established in the check station area and parking lots to increase physical distancing among hunters and staff. Controls may include parking markers, directional signage, requiring hunters to remain in vehicles, plexiglass barriers, extended counter tops, ground markers, etc.
- To allow for slower processing times, check-in for hunters holding reservations and for lottery or first-come-first-served opportunities may begin earlier than usual. These times will be posted and included in the reservation newsletter and on the relevant web page.

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Hunting Reservations and Lotteries

- To minimize the number of hunters congregating around the check stations, lottery and first-come-first-served check-in will begin at a set time as opposed to immediately after reservation-holders are checked in (e.g. 1.5 hours before shoot time).
- Hunters will be asked to remain in their vehicles until called by staff to check in or check out by number.

In the Field and Check-out

- Controls for hunter/visitor check-out will be in place to minimize contact between hunters and staff, which may include drop boxes for collecting permits and harvest report cards.
- Staff inspecting harvested birds will wear masks and gloves and maintain appropriate distance from hunters.
- These measures may result in delayed posting of harvest results.

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Camping

- CDFW will accept RV Camping applications, where applicable, for the 2020-2021 hunt season. However, a final decision about whether to allow RV camping has not yet been made. If the decision is made to cancel camping, applicants will be contacted in advance of the season.
- If camping is allowed, visitors with camping reservations will be contacted before their scheduled arrival to confirm their reservation and to ask if they or someone in their household is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms. If the visitor answers in the affirmative their reservation will be rescheduled or canceled.
- Camping operations, if allowed, will be consistent with local, state, and federal public health guidelines.

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Appendix 3. Central Region COVID-19 Hunter Check Station Modifications

Mendota Wildlife Area

General

Plexiglass windows will be installed with approximately 3 inches of space at bottom of window.

- Physical distancing of hunters entering wildlife area will be accomplished by limiting vehicle entry to check station.
- Portable restrooms will be available for use.

Check-in

- Reservation letters will be visually inspected, verified using the list from LRB and placed into a drop box.
- Licenses will be shown through the window and visually inspected by DFW employee.
- A drop box will receive the 1- or 2-day pass and the entry permit will be issued.

Check-out

- To reduce employee use of a high traffic, single hunter harvest tally sheet, all employees will be issued a clipboard with a daily harvest sheet.
- Employees will tally species harvest directly to multiple harvest sheets, also recording total permits returned.
- Two receptacles will be placed on driver's side of each exit lane for hunters to deposit permits.

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Kern NWR

General

Plexiglass barriers will be installed with approximately 3 inches along all counter tops inside check station.

- Physical distancing of hunters entering wildlife area will be accomplished by loudspeaker announcement of reservations and lottery hunters, limiting entry inside check station to one hunting party at a time.
- Hunting parties will only stay inside check station to be processed for daily entry permits.
- Portable restrooms will be available for use.

Check-in

Reservation letters will be visually inspected, verified using the list from LRB and placed into a drop box. Licenses will be shown through the window and visually inspected by DFW employee. A drop box will receive the 1- or 2-day pass and the entry permit will be issued.

Check-out

- A drop box for permits will be placed near vehicle exit point and hunters will place filled permits in drop box. Employees will only handle permits when gloved and necessary for refill of hunt assignments.

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All Grasslands Areas (Los Banos WA, Volta WA, Salt Slough, San Luis NWR, Kesterson NWR, and Merced NWR)

- COVID-19 informational signage reminding visitors of appropriate safety measures and physical distancing requirements will be placed conspicuously throughout the areas, including but not limited to check stations, parking lots, portable restrooms.
- Signage will be placed as needed to designate overnight parking spaces or areas to help facilitate appropriate physical distancing.
- Hand sanitizer or hand washing stations will be deployed for the public and staff and will be accompanied by applicable signage reminding all to follow appropriate hand hygiene.
- Frequently touched surfaces such as the counter tops outside of the check station windows will be fitted with plexiglass or a similar product to allow for routine cleaning and disinfection.
- Secondary barriers may be installed outside the check station windows to reduce staff exposure to the public.
- Hunters will be required to wear masks in line and while interacting with check station staff per state and local guidance.
- We are also looking into externally mounted LED display boards that can assist us in our messaging of expectations around the check station as well as manage our check-in procedures by adding a visual component to the PA systems currently used.

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All Grasslands Areas (Los Banos WA, Volta WA, Salt Slough, San Luis NWR, Kesterson NWR, and Merced NWR)

Lotteries and Check-in

- Lotteries for Volta, Merced, and Los Banos will continue from 6-9pm. Lotteries will be conducted using scanners outside windows, the public will scan the hunting license bar code.
- Lottery results will be posted on the CDFW Grasslands web page and no longer displayed in windows near the check station. Results may be placed in display cases where individuals can view them. Distancing guidelines will be in place at those display cases.
- Maps, previous day hunt results, and other hands-on information traditionally available at our check stations may now be available on the website or other web pages.

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Los Banos Wildlife Area

General

- Permanent restroom facilities will be closed to the public. Portable restrooms will be available for use.
- Hunters must appear in person and can only put in for one of three hunt areas. One lottery number is good for entry of two adult hunters, four juniors or four non-shooters, an aggregate of four of both, or the capacity of the blind or assigned pond.
- Two external windows will be used for processing hunters. Reservation letters will be visually inspected, verified using the list from LRB, and placed into a drop box. Licenses will be shown through the window and visually inspected by DFW employee. A drop box will receive the one- or two-day pass and the yellow permit will be marked 1, 2, or S (season) and passed from one check station person to the next for hunt assignment.

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Los Banos Wildlife Area (cont.)

Check-out

- Check-out will also be done through the window unless hands-on inspections of birds are needed to ascertain sex and species. Birds will be placed on the table and check station employee will mark internal kill sheet with birds. Hunter will drop permit into drop box for tallying later. If hands-on inspection is needed employee will ask the hunter to leave the birds on the table, step back and the attendant will inspect the birds. Once completed the employee will sanitize hands before entering the check station.
- All passes and permits will be disinfected using best practices, use of gloves and masks while processing the permits taking care not to touch their face. Once completed gloves will be properly disposed of and employee will sanitize or wash hands.

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Volta Wildlife Area

General- Portable restrooms will be available for use

Lotteries and Check-in

- Two external windows will be used for processing hunters when needed i.e. opening weekend. Reservation letters will be visually inspected, verified using the list from LRB and placed into a drop box. Licenses will be shown through the window and visually inspected by DFW employee. A drop box will receive the 1- or 2-day pass and the yellow permit will be marked with 1, 2, or S (season) and that day's hunt assignment.

Check-out

Check-out will also be done through the window unless hands-on inspections of birds are needed to ascertain sex and species. Birds will be placed on the table and check station employee will mark

- internal kill sheet with birds. Hunter will drop permit into drop box for tallying later. If hands-on inspection is needed, employee will ask the hunter to leave the birds on the table, step back and the attendant will inspect the birds. Once completed the employee will sanitize hands upon entering the check station.
- All passes and permits will be disinfected using best practices, use of gloves and masks while processing the permits taking care not to touch their face. Once completed, gloves will be properly disposed of and employee will sanitize or wash hands.

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Salt Slough Wildlife Area and San Luis NWR

General

- The three windows facing the parking area will be used for processing hunters. Reservation letters will be visually inspected at window #1, verified using the list from LRB and placed into a drop box. Licenses and stamps will be shown through window #2 and visually inspected by DFW employee. A drop box will receive the 1- or 2-day pass and the yellow permit will be marked 1, 2, or S (season) and passed from one check station person to the next for hunt assignment. Passes will be marked with appropriate hunt assignment at window #3 and passed to hunter.
- All passes and permits will be disinfected using best practices, use of gloves and masks while processing the permits, taking care not to touch their face. Once completed gloves will be properly disposed of and employee will sanitize or wash hands.
- Permanent restroom facilities will be closed to the public. Portable restrooms will be available for use.
- Lost items turned in to the check station will have any pertinent information collected (date found, where found, parking lot number, name if on item, make model and serial number, name of person finding item, time), An employee wearing gloves and face mask will document the information, place item and documentation in a plastic bag and seal. All information shall be entered on a Lost and Found chart. Firearms turned in shall be treated the same way and follow U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service protocol for lost firearms.

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Salt Slough Wildlife Area and San Luis NWR (cont.)

Lotteries and Check-in

- General lottery for Salt Slough, Gadwall, San Luis, South Freitas, and Bear Creek hunt areas will continue from 6pm-9pm.
- Hunters must appear in person. One lottery number is good for entry of two adult hunters, four juniors or four non-shooters, an aggregate of four of both, or the capacity of the blind or assigned pond.

Check-out

- Check-out will also be done through the window unless hands-on inspections of birds are required to determine sex and species. If hands-on inspection is necessary, employee shall wear proper gloves. Birds will be placed on the table and check station employee will mark internal kill sheet with birds. Hunter will drop permit into drop box for tallying later. If hands-on inspection is needed employee will ask the hunter to leave the birds on the table, step back and the attendant will inspect the birds. Gloves will be removed using proper procedures and disposed of following guidelines. Once completed the employee will sanitize hands before entering the check station.
- Returned permits in drop boxes at outlying hunt areas (West Bear Creek, South Freitas, Blue Goose, Gadwall) will be collected once between 11am and 1pm by an employee wearing gloves and mask. Number of permits returned for each area will be counted and called back to the check station to refill vacancies. Collected permits will be placed in a tightly sealed plastic bag and securely placed in the bed of the truck for transport back to the check station. Harvest tallies will be compiled later.

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Kesterson NWR

General

- All passes and permits will be disinfected using best practices, use of gloves and masks while processing the permits taking care not to touch their face. Once completed, gloves will be properly disposed of and employee will sanitize or wash hands.
- Portable restrooms will be available for use.

Lotteries and Check-in

- Lotteries for China Island, North Freitas, and Kesterson will continue from 6pm-9pm.
- Hunters must appear in person and can only put in for one of three hunt areas. One lottery number is good for entry of two adult hunters, four juniors or four non-shooters, an aggregate of four of both, or the capacity of the blind or the Coast Guard approved capacity of the boat.
- Freitas Unit permits and reservations will be received and put into Freitas as before by the night person.
- Two external windows will be used for processing hunters. Reservation letters will be visually inspected, verified using the list from LRB and placed into a drop box. Licenses will be shown through the window and visually inspected by DFW employee. A drop box will receive the 1- or 2-day pass and the yellow permit will be marked with 1, 2, or S (season) and passed from one check station person to the next for hunt assignment.

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Kesterson NWR (cont.)

Check-out

- Check-out will also be done through the window unless hands-on inspections of birds are needed to ascertain sex and species. Birds will be placed on the table and check station employee will mark internal kill sheet with birds. Hunter will drop permit into drop box for tallying later. If hands-on inspection is needed employee will ask the hunter to leave the birds on the table, step back and the attendant will inspect the birds. Once completed, the employee will sanitize hands before entering the check station.

Merced NWR

General

- All passes and permits will be disinfected using best practices, use of gloves and masks while processing the permits, taking care not to touch their face. Once completed gloves will be properly disposed of and employee will sanitize or wash hands.
- Portable restrooms will be available for use.

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Merced NWR (cont.)

Lotteries and Check-in

- One external window will be used for processing hunters. Reservation letters will be visually inspected, verified using the list from LRB and placed into a drop box. Licenses will be shown through the window and visually inspected by DFW employee. A drop box will receive the 1- or 2-day pass and the yellow permit will be marked with 1, 2, or S (season) and that day's hunt assignment.

Check-out

- Check-out will also be done through the window unless hands-on inspections of birds are needed to ascertain sex and species. Birds will be placed on the table and check station employee will mark internal kill sheet with birds. Hunter will drop permit into drop box for tallying later. If hands-on inspection is needed employee will ask the hunter to leave the birds on the table, step back and the attendant will inspect the birds. Once completed the employee will sanitize hands before entering the check station.



Hopefully, at some point this season we can return to our normal normal!! Until then, be safe and be well!